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THE
LOYAL SPEECH
OF

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Minister of Sheriff-Hales in Shropshire; Spoken at Shifnal, in the same County, upon the Proclamation of his Sacred Majesty, King JAMES the Second, &c.

Gentlemen !

YOU have laid the greatest Task upon me, that I ever under-went in all my Days : You have obliged me to speak of the most important Matters of our Nation, and allowed me scarce one Minute for Thought or Premeditation : But may that Almighty Power, *by whom Kings reign*, instruct me ! and may an Heart and Soul full of Loyalty, furnish my Tongue with Argument and Elocution !

My Undertaking is great and difficult : Who can speak of Kings, without Awe and Reverence ? Or, Who can be an Orator, when those Two contrary Passions of *Grief* and *Joy*, at once struggle in his Brest ? I cannot look back to the Peaceful Days of *Charles* the Second ; I cannot remember the lasting Happinesses of his Reign, but I must drop a Tear upon his Hearse : Nor can I look forwards, towards the present Glories of *James* the Second, but I am overwhelm'd with Joy, and a Loyal Transport seizes me. We have lost One of the Best of Princes, which ever sway'd these *British* Scepters, *Charles* the Gracious ; a Prince, who was the Care of Heaven, the Darling of his Subjects ; whose Life was a Miracle, and his whole Reign one continued Blessing : *Mercy* and *Justice* were the Supporters of his Throne ; and *Peace* and *Good Wishes* the Legacy he has left us. I cannot relate the last Words of that Incomparable Prince, without a Sigh ; I dare not name them, without Tears for our general Loss : Thus he remembered us in his dying Words, if such a Prince may be said to die : *Brother ! I am now going to resign up my Self to God, and my Crown and Government to You ; Grant me these few Requests.*

I. *In all Your Undertakings, set the Fear of God before Your Eyes, and let that direct you.*

II. *Remember to maintain the Church of England, as now by Law Establish'd.*

III. *Govern Your Subjects with Mercy, Ease and Peace.*

IV. *Be good to my Queen, and Children.*

This was the Royal Legacy which he left us ; a Legacy, truly becoming such a Prince as *Charles* the Second. But this is not all, though a great deal more than we deserved, the greatest Blessing is still behind ; He has left us his Royal Brother, *JAMES* the Second, to Succeed him in his Throne, and Vertues : This must wipe away all our Grievs, this must make our Joys Perfect, and Crown our Lives with a lasting Happiness. The *Sun* is set with us ; but no Night follows : *Charles* the Gracious, is only exchang'd for *JAMES* the Just : And though our King be dead, yet the Monarch lives. We are blest again with a Gracious Prince ; A Prince, whose Vertues need no *Panegyrick* ; and to Praise him according to his most Excellent Greatness, is above the feeble Power of *Oratory* and *Eloquence*. What Vertues can we wish for in a Prince, which our present Sovereign brings not to his Throne ? What Joies are wanting to make us Happy, which he will not bestow ?

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Would we have our Religion secured? • We have the Laws on our side, and the Royal Word of a King for't: The King has declared, That he will maintain our Religion, as now by Law Established; and do what in him lies, to make the Church of *England* flourish.

Gentlemen! *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power*: And what the King hath declared, he will make good; for no Prince is juster to his Word, than he is. Would we have our Rights and Liberties preserved? We have a Prince of the greatest Justice upon Earth. Whil'st he was a Subject, he was the most Faithful Friend, and the Best of Masters to his Servants; and, I hope, a good Master will never make an ill King. But more; We have his Royal Promise, *That he will walk in the Steps of his dearest Brother*. Would we have the Glories of our Kingdom maintain'd; would we see the Old *Englisb* Bravery once again Flourish! We have now the most Victorious and Warlike Prince in *Christendom*; a King, who dares attempt any thing, but an ill Act; a King, who has been a Souldier almost from his Cradle. I need not tell you, how he signalized his Valour under the *Protestant* *Marshal Turenne* in *France*: I need not speak of his Magnanimity under *Don Juan* of *Austria*, against the *French* King then in League with the *Englisb* Rebels: I need not remember you of the Extraordinary Hazards of his Royal Person, in the *Dutch* Engagements, fighting for the Rights and Honour of our Nation, and exposing himself in a Shower of Fire and Bullets; Bullets, which distinguish not the greatest Prince from the meanest Souldier.

Gentlemen! He was then the Joy and Treasure of our Nation; and our Representatives in *Parliament*, did not only gratefully acknowledge his Services; but did almost Loyally chide him, for hazarding his Royal Person in War, in whom all our Hopes and Expectations were center'd. He is still the same *JAMES the Just*, the Valiant, and the Brave; though we (I wish I were not to name it, for the Honour of my Nation) ingratelully revolted from him.

Away then with all *Phanatick* Fears and Jealousies! Can the Grand-Child of *James the Peaceful*, can the Son of *Charles the Martyr*, can the Brother of *Charles the Gracious*, can the Victorious and Just *James Duke of York and Albany* prove an ill King? It cannot be. Can he, who has been an Obedient Subject for Fifty two Years together; can the justest Master, and the firmest Friend, and the most Faithful Brother, prove an ill King? It cannot be; and God forbid, that any one should think it.

Gentlemen! Let us remember our Duties, and endeavour all we can to be Loyal; and then we need not doubt, but God will bless us with a Merciful and a Gracious King. Our Submission to his Rule, our Content and Cheerful Obedience under his Government, will return to us in Showers of Mercy, Kindness and Justice.

Good Subjects do generally make good Kings; and if our King should prove otherwise, it will be our own Faults. What shall I say more? *Charles the Gracious* still lives in *JAMES the Just*. We have only chang'd the Name, not alter'd the Sovereign.

Away then with those odious Names of *Whigg* and *Tory*; let 'em be forgotten and buried: Let us remember, that we are *Christians*, and *Englisb*-Men; the former will teach us Loyalty and Allegiance to our King; Love, Unity, and Good Wishes towards one another: the latter will engage us to maintain the Glories and Peace of our Church and Nation; and to preserve the Best of *Kings*, and the Happiest of *Governments*. Let us all, with one Heart and Mind, Bless God for these Mercies; and say,

God save King JAMES the Second.